

The President's Daily Brief

29 August 1969

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SOVIET AFFAIRS

Yesterday's Pravda contains another lengthy attack on Communist China, distinguished by the sternness of its warning to the Chinese to forego further armed provocations in the border regions and unique in its appeal to the rest of the world to recognize the danger presented by China. The editorial seems to go far beyond what would be necessary to influence domestic opinion. By alluding to Chinese nuclear weapons and pointing out that a Soviet-Chinese conflict "would not leave a single continent on the sidelines," the Soviet writer conjures up the specter of a full scale nuclear war. Pravda also states that "most serious representatives of capitalist countries" are also concerned about Chinese aggressiveness.

VIETNAM

The Viet Cong have increased their proselyting of South Vietnamese troops, according to many sources. The problem seems particularly severe in IV Corps. Documents captured in the delta have advised Communist cadre to keep an eye on the morale of South Vietnamese forces and exploit their general desire for peace and lack of confidence in the Saigon government.

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MIDDLE EAST

As part of its policy of establishing its presence in the occupied territories, Israel is adding six new settlements to the seventeen or more already set up in the Golan Heights, the Jordan River Valley, and northern Sinai. The policy is not universally popular in Israel. Its opponents argue that such moves undermine Israeli demands for a negotiated peace, but these arguments have been ignored or overruled by Defense Minister Dayan and others who claim that Israel must look to its defenses, for peace is far away.

There are grounds for Dayan's thesis. El Erian, the Egyptian chargé at the United Nations, told Ambassador Yost that some of the proposed commitments in the US peace draft would "impose limitations on Arab sovereignty" which would be "psychologically very difficult for Arabs to accept." In Jordan, King Husayn complained to a New York Times correspondent about the failure of the US to effect the reopening of the East Ghor canal. Husayn's confidence in US abilities to influence Israel has always been subject to ebb and flow with changing circumstances, but he now seems to have convinced himself that the US has become indifferent to the course of events and has "written him off."

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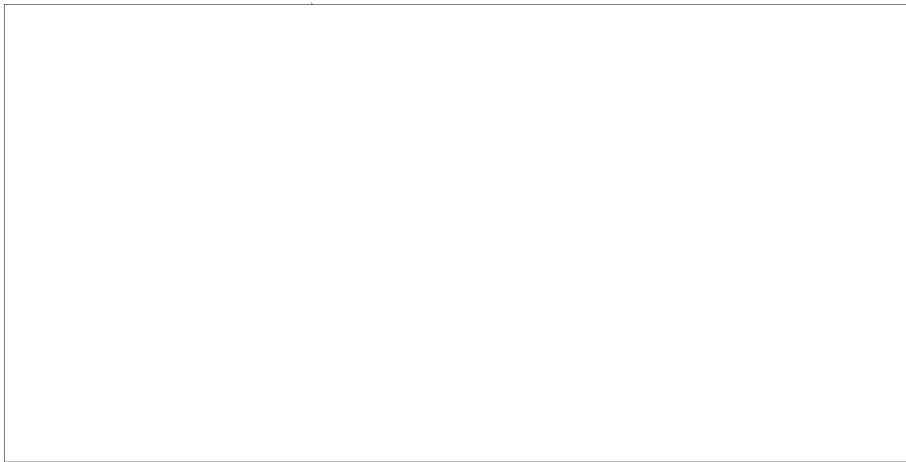
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JAPAN

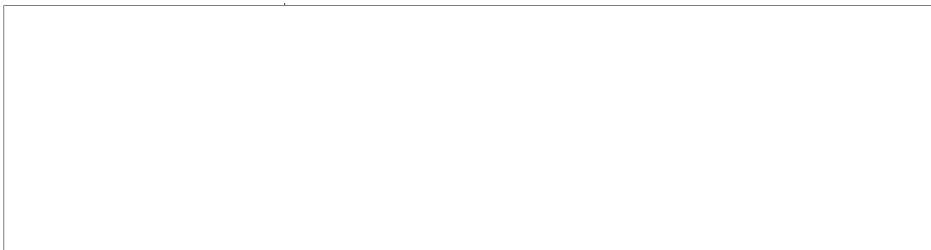
The government apparently has backed away from an early signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Although publicly uncommitted, it had previously indicated it would sign prior to the UN General Assembly session next month. Sato, with an eye toward next year's national elections, prefers not to add to the conservatives' problems over Okinawan reversion and extension of the US-Japan security treaty by going against public opinion on this issue. Opposition to the treaty stems largely from fear that Japan would permanently commit itself to second class status by renouncing its nuclear option.

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